Great Shi'i Works

'Al-Kafi' by Al-Kulayni

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The Author

The author of *al-Kafi* was *thiqat al-Islam,* Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. Ya'qub b. Ishaq al-Kulaini al-Razi. He died in 328 A.H. or 329 A.H. (939 or 940 A.D.). Very little is known of his life and there is some dispute as to whether the *nisba* by which he is known is al-Kulaini or al-Kulini. However, it is agreed that it refers to a village in Iran, Kulain or Kulin; both were villages there.[1]

He first worked as a religious scholar and *faqih* (student of *fiqh* or religious law) among the Imami-Shi'i scholars of al-Raiy in Iran. Then he moved to Baghdad and became head of the religious and legal scholars of the Imamis during the time when al-Muqtadir was Caliph. Al-Kulaini's life's work took place during the time of the *sufara'* of the *Mahdi* (the agents who acted on behalf of the Hidden Imam during the lesser occultation, *al ghaiba al-sughra)*.[2]

Al-Kulaini is accredited with several works during this period. Among these are, as well as *al-Kafi,* a *Kitab al-rijal,* (a book in which men are assessed as authorities for traditions), *al-Radd 'ala 'l-Qaramata* ("Refutation of the Carmatians", *Rasa' il al-a'immata* "Letters of the Imams" and an anthology of poetry about the Imams. Only *al-Kafi* appears to have survived.[3]

Al- Kafi

Al-Kafi is a collection of the traditions taught by the Prophet and the Imams and handed down to the Muslim Community by the disciples of the Imams. The name *al-Kafi* means "that which is sufficient" that is, the book was intended to be a comprehensive collection of Imami-Shi'i traditions. This is explained by al-Kulaini in his introduction to the work:

> "...You wanted to have a book which would be sufficient (for your religious needs) *(kafin),* which would include all kinds of knowledge *('ilm)* of religion, which would be adequate for the student, and to which the teacher might refer. Thus it could be used by anyone who wanted knowledge of religion and of legal practice *('amal)* according to sound traditions *(athar)* from the truthful ones (the *Imams) ..."*

It is claimed that it took al-Kulaini twenty years to complete *al-Kafi.* It is indeed a very full and comprehensive work, divided into three sections, *al-usul, al-furu* and *al-rawda.*

The *usul* give traditions concerning the principles of religion and principles on which religious law is based. The *furu'* concern the traditions which elaborate the details of religious law, while the *rawda* is a collection of traditions outlining various points of religious interest and including some of the letters and speeches of the Imams.

One of the principal features of the work is that the traditions are presented systematically in chapters according to their subject matter. This is a system which Islamic scholars had begun to use in the second half of the second century and in the third century of the Islamic era. Al-Kulaini was not the first Imami scholar to use the method. There are other works of traditions which use the same method, notably *Kitab al-Mahasin* of Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Khalid al-Barqi (d. 274/887).[4] However it seems to have been the first work to present such a comprehensive survey of Imami traditions in this manner.

The source collections of traditions were known as *usul.* These were collections of traditions, either heard directly from the Imam or at least at second hand. There were said to have been four hundred of such collections.[5] These traditions were not arranged in chapters according to subject but

arranged in the order in which the traditions were heard, regardless of subject matter or which particular Imam they were heard from.[6] It was these *usul* as well as earlier edited collections which were the basis of al-Kulaini's collection as he heard them taught by earlier scholars. Unfortunately with the development of the comprehensive collections, the *usul* must have become less important, and only a few survive in manuscript.

Traditionists before al-Kulaini and traditionists after him, examined the *isnads* (chain of authorities) with great care. Their purpose was to make sure that all reporters of a particular tradition were men of true faith; al-Kulaini himself seems to be less concerned with the *isnad* than with the *matn* or content of the tradition. Thus he sometimes reports traditions with men in the *isnad,* who were not strictly speaking disciples of the Imams; sometimes they belong to a different persuasion like the Zaidis, sometimes they are *ghulat,* extremists in their views. Some men in the *isnads* are those who regarded one of the earlier Imams as the final Imam and there are even men entirely unconnected with *Shi'i* views.[7] The scholars of tradition elaborated a system of categorising the different traditions according to the level of authenticity of a tradition, in terms of *isnad* and subject matter.

The number of traditions in *al-Kafi* is 15,181;[8] according to another reckoning 15,176.[9] If the traditions reported in different sections are counted, the number is over 1,000 more. Of the basic traditions, 5,072 are considered sound *(sahih)* by scholars, i.e. first category; 144 are regarded as good *(hasan),* second category; 178 are held to be trustworthy *(muwaththaq),* third category; 302 are adjudged to be strong *(qawi),* fourth category; and 9,484 are considered weak *(da'if),* fifth category.[10] The fact that a tradition is considered weak does not mean that it is not true. What it means is that the scholars of tradition have found some weakness in the tradition, usually one of the persons in the *isnad,* which suggests the possibility that the tradition might not go back to the Imam as claimed. The science developed by Islamic scholars of tradition in order to examine the *isnads* and subject matter of traditions is a very specialised study; it involves, in particular, *`ilm al-rijal,* the study of the backgrounds of individual traditionists who have handed on the tradition.

The *usul* of *al-Kafi* are divided into eight *kutub* or chapters and most of the *kutub* are divided into *abwab* or sections. The eight *kutub* are.

1. *Kitab al-'aql wa-'l'jahl,* "The Chapter of Reason and Ignorance". This chapter presents the theological distinction between reason and ignorance.
2. *Kitab fadl al-'ilm,* "The Chapter of the Excellence of Knowledge". In this chapter knowledge *('ilm)* is dealt with on the basis of its basic early Islamic meaning of the traditional knowledge of Islam, i.e. knowledge of religion that has been passed on and inherited. In the course of this chapter, sections deal with the methods of approaching Islamic traditional knowledge; the methods of judging the truth of the subject matter of traditions, a description of traditions from the Imams and arguments against the use of personal opinion *(ra'y)* and analogy *(qiyas).*
3. *Kitab al-tawhid,* "The Chapter of Unity". This, as its name suggests, deals with the theology of God.
4. *Kitab al-hujja,* "The Chapter of the Proof". This deals with the need for man and the world to have "a proof". That "proof" is the Imams, and before them it was the prophets. It also includes an historical section on the Imams.
5. *Kitab al-Iman wa-'l-kufr,* "The Chapter of Faith and Unbelief". This is a comprehensive survey of the elements of faith *(iman)* and unbelief *(kufr).* It includes such important topics as "the pillars of Islam", and it also deals with the difference between faith *(iman)* and submission to God *(Islam).*
6. *Kitab al-du'a', "The Chapter of Prayer".* This does not concern the statutory *salat* which is also translated "prayer". This chapter deals with personal prayers *(du'a')* as distinct from the *salat* which is performed in a prescribed manner at prescribed times. It records prayers recommended by the Imams for a variety of situations and occasions.
7. *Kitab al-fadl al-Qur'an,* "The Chapter of the Excellence of the Qur'an". The title of the chapter shows that it concerns the advantages that accrue to the believer who recites the

Qur'an, as well as advising on the methods of recitation.

8. *Kitab al-'ishra,* "The Chapter of Companionship". At first sight it seems rather surprising to find such a chapter included in the *usul* or principles of religion. The main concern of the other chapters has been man's relationship with God. This chapter emphasizes that that relationship with God also encompasses man's relationship with his fellow men.

The *furu'* of *al-kafi* are concerned with the elaboration of the details of Islamic law. Islamic law, as is well known, concerns the whole man and his conduct towards God is as much a matter of Islamic law as his conduct towards his fellow men. The *furu'* contain many more traditions than the usul and there are 26 *kutub.* It opens in the traditional Islamic manner with the *Kitab al-tahara* , "The Chapter of Purity", which concerns the ritual purification that is necessary before prayer *(salat)* and when the state of ritual purity is broken. The next book *Kitab al-haid,* "The Chapter of Menstruation" concerns one of the important states in which ritual purity is broken, that of menstruation. The third book also concerns a state which breaks ritual purity, that of death and *Kitab al-jana'iz,* "The Chapter of Funerals" deals with funerals and other matters concerned with burial rites. The *Kitab al-salat,* "The Chapter of Prayer" outlines the rules for ritual prayer, and also gives details of superrogatory prayer.

Following *Kitab al-salat* is another pillar of Islam, the alms tax *(al-Zakat)* paid as a Muslim. After this comes the *Kitab al-siyam,* "The Chapter of Fasting". Here the rules of the prescribed fast of Ramadan are outlined as well as those of voluntary fasts, and fasts performed as an act of expiation. *Kitab al-Hajj,* "The Chapter of the Pilgrimage" gives the rules of that great Islamic rite. Al-Kulaini also includes in this chapter a section on visiting the tombs of the Prophet and the Imams *(al-Ziarat).*

The next chapter *Kitab al-jihad* presents traditions on the regulations for holy warfare. It is followed by *Kitab al-ma'isha* which conerns the manner of earning one's living. All sorts of trading problems are treated in this chapter. Marriage *(nikah)* is the subject of the next book. There are numerous details including a very detailed section on *mut'a* or temporary marriage. Marriage is naturally followed by the birth of children and the next book deals with what is necessary and what is recommended at that time. Although it deals with a variety of matters concerned with the birth and bringing up of children, it is called *Kitab al-'aqiqa. Aqiqa* is actually a sacrifice performed on behalf of a seven-day old child. The hair of the child is cut off and its weight in silver given as *sadaqa* "charity". The Prophet performed this sacrifice on behalf of al-Hasan and al-Husain and Fatima gave away the *sadaqa.* After marriage and children, the next subject is that of divorce *(al-talaq).* The different laws concerning divorce are detailed in traditions from the Prophet and the Imams.

Then the different kinds of slaves and the different methods of freeing them are discussed in *kitab al-'itq wa'-l-tadbir wa-'l-katiba.* The next two chapters concern hunting *(said)* and ritual slaughter (dhaba'ih). There follow three chapters on daily living: one is concerned with foods *(at'ima)* another drinks *(ashriba),* and the third with clothes, ornaments and courteousness *(al-ziq wa-'l-tajammul wa-'l-muru'a).* After this comes a chapter on domestic animals *(dawajin).* Two chapters deal with inheritance. The first entitled *al-wasaya* deals with bequests while the second *al-mawarith* outlines the ordinary laws of inheritance. The remaining chapters all concern the administration of the law. *Kitab al-hudud* outlines the circumstances and the manner in which punishments, which have the authority of the Qur'an, and the Prophet should be administered, while *al-diyat* concerns the laws of blood vengeance and details the compensation that must be given if someone harms another physically. *Kitab al-shahadat* concerns the requirements for testimony in legal cases, and *Kitab al-qada' wa-'l-ahkam* outlines the code of behaviour incumbent upon judges and what type of people they should be. The *furu* closes with a discussion of oaths, vows and the manner of atonement when the former two are broken in *Kitab al-aiman wa-l-nudhur wa-'l-kaffarat.*

In the *rawda* of *al-Kafi,* al-Kulaini does not follow the systematic method he had used in the *usul* and the *furu'.* The traditions follow one another in what appears to be a fairly inconsistent order. It

certainly lacks the detailed systematic approach that is so obviously present in the other two parts of the book.

In presenting the traditions in *al-Kafi,* al-Kulaini's main approach seems to have been to let the traditions speak for themselves. He intervenes very little himself. Sometimes he thinks it necessary to explain some discrepancy or apparent inconsistency, but these occasions are very rare. His main contribution to the task has been the massive work of collecting and editing.

The importance of *al-Kafi* as a work of tradition is considerable. It is regarded as one of the four major works of *Shi'i* traditions. This has led to considerable number of commentaries being written about it by later writers. The most important of these is *Mir'at al-'uqul fi sharh akhbar al al-rasul* by al-Majlisi (d. 1110/1698). Other commentators include Mulla Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi (d. 1050/1640), al-Mazandarani (d. 1080/1699), al-Qazwini (d. 1089/1678) and Muhammad Baqir b. Damad (d. 1040/1630). All these commentaries have been published, though most of them nearly a hundred years ago. In addition to these commentaries, there are numerous others, many of which have also been published.[11]

The great value of *al-Kafi* to Shi'i Muslims is emphasized by the number of outstanding scholars of their community who have considered it worthwhile to write commentaries on the work. *Al-Kafi* represents a decisive moment in the collection of traditions from the Prophet and the Imams and their systematic presentation.

Notes:

1. Cf. 'Ali Akbar al-Ghaffari's introduction to his eight volume edition of al-Kulaini's *al-Kafi* Teheran, 3rd edition 1388-), I, 9-13
2. *Ibid.* I 13-14
3. *Ibid.* I 14
4. *Ibid*. I 23-24 citing page 8 of al-Kulaini's text.
5. This work has been edited in two volumes by Jalal al-Din al-Husaini and published in Teheran, 1370 A.H.
6. On the *Usul,* see Agha Buzurg al-Tihrani *al-Dhari'a ila tasanif al-Shi'a* (Najaf and Teheran, 1963-), II, 125-129.
7. Hashim Ma'ruf al-Hasani *Dirasat fi '1-Kafi wa'-l-Sahih* (Sur 1968) 137-8
8. Based on a count of the various categories of Traditions given by Agha Buzurg al-Tihrani *op.cit.* XVII 245.
9. This number is given by Ali Akbar al-Ghaffar'i in his introduction to *al-Kafi,* I, 28 footnote 3
10. Agha Buzurg al-Tihrani, *op.cit*., XVII, 245.
11. F. Sezgin, *Geshichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Leiden 1967-), I, 541-2.

Great Shi'i Works

'Tahdhib al-Ahkam' and 'Al-Istibsar' by Al-Tusi

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The Author

Shaikh al-ta'ifa (the teacher of the community) Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. al-Hasan al-Tusi was born in Tus in Iran in the year 385 of the Islamic era. His career marks the climax of a very great period in Shi'ite Islamic scholarship and learning. It was during this period that Shi'ite scholars were without rivals in the Islamic world. Al-Shaikh al-Tusi's teachers included al-Shaikh al-Mufid, and the two brothers, members of *Ahl al-bait* and both outstanding scholars, al-Sharif al-Murtada and al-Sharif al-Radi.

This period of great public Shi'ite Islamic scholarship had begun with al-Kulaini (died 328/9 A.H.), whose collection of traditions, *al-Kafi,* is the first of the four major works of Shi'ite Islamic traditions.[1] It was then continued with al-Shaikh al-Saduq lbn Babawaih (died 381 A.H.); his great collection of traditions, *Man la yahduruh al-faqih,* is the second of the major works of traditions.[2] The remaining two major collections of traditions were compiled by al-Shaikh al-Tusi and they are *Tahdhib al-ahkam fi sharh al-munqi' a*[3] and *al-Istibsar fima 'khtalaf min al-akhbar.*[4]

Al-Shaikh al-Tusi grew up in Tus and began his studies there. In 408 A.H. he left Tus to study in Baghdad. There he first studied under al-Shaikh al-Mufid, who died in 413 A.H. Leadership of the Shi'ite scholars then fell to al-Sharif al-Murtada. The latter remained in this position until his death in 436 A.H. During this time al-Shaikh al-Tusi was closely associated with al-Sharif al-Murtada. His vast scholarship and learning made him a natural successor of al-Sharif al-Murtada as the leading spokesman of Shi'ite Islam. So impressive was his learning that the Abbasid caliph, al-Qadir bi-'llah, attended his lectures and sought to honour him.

In the closing years of al-Shaikh al-Tusi's life the political situation in Baghdad and the domains of the Abbasid caliphate was in turmoil. The Saljuqids fiercely anti-Shi'ite, were gaining commanding power in the centre of the Islamic Empire at the expense of the Buyids who had always seemed tolerant to Shi'ite views. In 447 Tughril-bek the leaders of the Saljuqids entered Baghdad. At this time many of the *'ulama'* in Baghdad, both Sunni and Shi'ite were killed. The house of al-Shaikh al-Tusi was burnt down, as were his books and the works he had written in Baghdad, together with important libraries of Shi'ite hooks. Fanaticism against the Shi'a was great.

Al-Shaikh al-Tusi, seeing the danger of remaining in Baghdad, left and went to al-Najaf. Al-Najaf, the city where 'Ali b. Abi Talib had been martyred, was already a very important city in the hearts of Shi'ite Muslims. However, it was al-Shaikh al-Tusi's arrival which was to give that city the impetus to become the leading centre of Shi'ite scholarship. This is a role, which it has maintained down to the present day.

Al-Shaikh al-Tusi died in al-Najaf in 460 A.H. His body was buried in a house there, which was made into a mosque as he had enjoined in his will. Even today his grave is a place of visitation in al-Najaf. Al-Tusi was succeeded by his son al-Hasan, who was known as al-Mufid al-Thani, and was himself an outstanding scholar.[5]

The learning of al-Shaikh al-Tusi extended over the whole of Islamic studies. He was a learned traditionist, whose two compilations will be discussed below; but he was not only a traditionist, he was also an authoritative jurist, who could interpret traditions to meet the needs of jurisprudence, and many of his works on jurisprudence and the principles of jurisprudence still survive, in particular *al-Mabsut* and *al-Nihaya.* In addition, he was the leading Shi'ite theologian of his time.

As well as writing works of a general theological nature, he also wrote specific works on individual topics. On the Imamate, he wrote *Talkhis al-Shafi,* which was based on al-Sharif al-Murtada's *al-Shafi fi 'l-imama.* He wrote a work on *al-Ghaiba,* the occultation of the 12th Imam. As a traditionist, he naturally had an interest in the men who related traditions, in his *Kitab al-rijal,* he tries to list most of the important Shi'ites. His *Fihrist* is an important work of Shi'ite bibliography. In it he lists many of the works of early Shi'ite writers and sometimes gives an account of their writers and the contents of the works. This work may to some extent reflect al-Tusi's own library before it was so tragically destroyed.

Tahdhib al-ahkam fi sharh al-muqni 'a

The title of this work could be translated as "The Refinement of the Laws (as Discussed) in Terms of the Explanation of *the Sufficiency".* "The Sufficiency" or *al-Muqni'a* was a work on traditions by al-Shaikh al-Mufid, the teacher of al-Tusi, who has been mentioned earlier. Thus the original intention of al-Tusi had been to write a commentary on *al-Muqni'a* of al-Mufid. However, he makes it clear in his introduction that his work would only concern the *furu'* of Islamic law, i.e. the practical regulations for carrying out the *sharia,* the holy law of Islam. He said: "I went first to the chapter which was connected with ritual purity (*tahara),* leaving aside the *(chapters)* which preceded it, which were about the Unity of God *(tawhid),* Justice *('adl),* Prophethood *(nubuwwa)* and the Imamate *(imama),* because the explanation of these would be too lengthy, and also because it was not the intention of this book to elucidate the principles of religion *(al-usul).[6]*

In his introduction, al-Tusi makes it clear that the principal motive for writing this work and limiting it to the *furu',* was the great differences which were arising in Shi'ite traditions. He mentions that these differences were being used against the Shi'a by their opponents as an argument against the truth of Shi'ite beliefs. The situation had become so critical that al-Tusi reports al-Mufid's account of one Shi'ite adherent who had left the community because of the contradictory traditions. Al-Tusi set himself the task of analysing the traditions concerned with *furu',* explaining which traditions were deficient and reconciling apparent contradictions in sound traditions. He used al-Mufid's *al-Maqni'a* as the basis for this task.[7] However, he did not only deal with the traditions used in *al-Muqni'a;* he analysed many more traditions which he included at the end of various sections, appendices of traditions not mentioned by al-Mufid, which he also discusses.

The method used is to quote the traditions and then al-Mufid's comments on them. This is often followed by al-Tusi's explanation of al-Mufid's comments. Sometimes, it is not always clear whether the explanation belongs to al-Mufid or al-Tusi. However, he quite often makes it clear that it is al-Mufid when he says: "Al Shaikh said..." But sometimes a discussion is introduced by the ambiguous terms: "He said..." This could refer to either al-Mufid or al-Tusi. In the appendices al-Tusi makes it quite clear that he is making the comments, for he says: "Muhammad b. al-Hasan said..."

The discussions on the traditions are sometimes of considerable length. An example is the discussion of the method of performing ritual ablutions, there quotations are made from Arabic verse to support the Shi'ite version of rubbing the feet instead of washing them.[8]

The work is divided into chapters *(kutub)* and the chapters into sections *(abwab)* with appendices following when appropriate. The work is a very comprehensive study of Shi'ite traditions and consists of the following chapters:

al-Tahara	Ritual Purity
al-Salat	Formal Prayer
al-Zakat	Alms Tax
al-Siyam	Fasting
al-Hajj	Pilgrimage
al-Jihad	Sacred War

al-Qadaya wa-'l-ahkam	Judgements and Legal Requirements
al-Makasib	Acquisitions
al-Tijarat	Trading
al-Nikah	Marriage
al-Talaq	Divorce
al-'itq wa-'l-tadbir wa-'l-mukatba	Manumission of Slaves (according to the various methods)
al-Ayman wa-'l nudhur wa-'1-kaffarat	Oaths, Vows and Atonements
al-Said wa-'l-dhaba'ih	Hunting and Ritual Slaughter
al-Wuquf wa-'l-sadaqat	Endowments and Alms
al- Wasaya	Bequests
al-Fara'id wa-'l-mawarith	Formal Rules of Inheritance
al-Hudud	Punishment prescribed by Revelation
al-Diyat	Indemnities for Bodily Injury

It is said that al-Tusi began this work during the life of al-Mufid and had reached the end of the chapter on "Ritual Purity" by the time of his death (413 A.H.). However the work was not finally finished until al-Tusi moved to al-Najaf (448 A.H.).[9]

One of the remarkable features of this work is that despite the great number of traditions, which had become known to al-Tusi since the time of al-Kulaini and lbn Babawaih, al-Tusi's interpretation of what are the correct traditions, preserves Shi'ite law in a very similar position to that of al-Kulaini and lbn Babawaih. The reason for the great spread of diverse traditions during the period from al-Kulaini's death to al-Tusi's (328/9 A.H.) death (460 A.H.) may have been the fact that this was a period in which the Buyids held sway in Baghdad; they were very sympathetic towards the Shi'a. Thus, this was a period in which the Shi'a were not persecuted and could admit their beliefs without too much fear. In such circumstances, there was much more opportunity for outsiders to bring extraneous traditions into the Shi'ite corpus. However al-Tusi had available to him many of the early works of *Usul* which had been available to the earlier Shi'ite compilers of collections of traditions. Al-Tusi says about this work: "When our companions looked at the *akhbar* (traditions) connected with what is permitted and forbidden *(al-halal wa-'l-haram)* which we had collected in it, they saw that they included most of what the sections of laws connected with jurisprudence. In all its sections and its chapters, only very little of the traditions of our companions, their books, *usul* and compilations has escaped.[10]

Al-Istibsar fima 'khtalaf al-akhbar

Al- Istibsar is the fourth and last of the major works of Shi'ite Islamic traditions. It covers the same field as *Tahdhib al-ahkam* but is considerably smaller. Al-Tusi mentions that his colleagues, after seeing the size of *Tahdhib al-ahkam* considered: "...... It would be useful that there should be a reference *(madhkur)* book which a beginner could use in his study of jurisprudence, or one who has finished, to remind himself, or the intermediate (student) to study more deeply. Thus (so that) all of them could obtain what they need and reach their soul's desire, what is connected with different traditions would be set in an abridged way . . . Therefore they asked me to summarise it *(Tahdhib al-ahkam)* and devote care to its compilation and abridgement, and to begin each section with an introduction about what I relied on for the legal decisions and traditions in it; then I should follow with those traditions which disagree and explain the reconciliation between the two without leaving out anything which was influential. I would follow my practice in my big book mentioned earlier (i.e. *Tahdhib al-ahkam)* and at the beginning of the book, I would explain briefly how traditions are weighed against each other, and how the practice of something was possible through (the authority) of (some of) them to the exclusion of the rest ..."[11] Al-Tusi, then, follows this statement with a

brief but comprehensive and clear outline of the principles of jurisprudence.[12]

As can be seen from al-Tusi's own introduction, *al-Istibsar* is essentially a summary of *Tahdhib al-ahkam.* Its methods are similar but briefer; there are not so many traditions used in the work and the explanations are more concise. In many ways it is closer to *Man la yahduruh al-faqih,* although unlike the latter it gives full *isnads* for the traditions quoted. However it is possible to say that *al-Kafi* and *Tahdhib al-ahkam* represent comprehensive collections of traditions, while *Man la yahduruh al-faqih* and *al-Istibsar* are books intended to be used as ready reference works for students and scholars.

The collections and commentaries of Shi'ite traditions did not end with al-Tusi but his works mark the high point in this process. It had begun with al-Kulaini, whose *al-Kafi,* while not the first collection, was certainly the first major collection based on the early works of *usul.* The process had been continued by lbn Babawaih; in his introduction to *Man la yahduruh al-faqih* he makes it clear that he had also used these *usul.* Al-Tusi, the author of the other two major works of Shi'ite traditions also admits his dependence on these early works. As has already been pointed out, these three authors and their four major works of tradition present a generally consistent picture of Shi'ite Islamic legal thinking. It is a remarkable picture of tradition and shows that, whatever the vagaries of individuals may have been, leading Shi'ite scholars had a clear and consistent view of their traditions.

Notes:

1. On al-Kulaini and *al-Kafi,* cf. *Al-Serat,* Vol. II, No.1 (March, 1976), 28-32
2. On Ibn Babawaih and *Man la yahduruh al-faqih,* cf. *Al-Serat,* Vol.II, No.2 (June, 1976), 19-22
3. New edition in ten volumes edited by al-Sayyid Hasan al-Musawi al-Khurasan, published in Teheran (3rd edition) 1390 A.H.
4. New edition in four volumes edited by al-Sayyid Hasan al-Musawi al-Khurasan, published in Teheran (3rd edition) 1390 A.H.
5. The details of the life of al-Shaikh al-Tusi have been taken from al-Sayyid Bahr al-Ulum's introduction to al-Tusi's *Talkhis al-Shafi* (3rd edition) (Qumm 1974) 1-45
6. *Tahdhib al-ahkam, op.cit.,* I, 3
7. *Idem* 2-3
8. *Idem,* 66-74
9. al-Musawi, "Introduction" *Tahdhib al-ahkam,* I, 46 citing al-Sayyid Bahr al-Ulum.
10. *al-Istibsar, op.cit.* I, 2
11. *Idem* 2-3
12. *Idem* 3-5
